

"WE must begin the child's training between the ages of two and three, not fearing brain fag and kindred bugaboos.

"DISCUSS abstract matters with the child from the first, teaching him to think. He should be able to conduct his own education by the time he is seven years old.

"AT the age of nine he should be as familiar with the ordinary branches of mathematics as the college entrant.

"AT twelve he should be ready for the regular college course. He should complete this in two years.

"HE should be doing a man's work before he is twenty."

"THE same amount of mental energy used in those silly games thought specially adapted for the childish mind can be directed to the development of his interests, intellectual activity and love of knowledge.

"BEING in a barbaric stage, we are afraid of thought. We are under the erroneous belief that early thinking and study causes nervousness and mental disorders.

—Professor Boris Sidis, of Harvard University.

TOO EARLY TEACHING COSTS YOUR CHILD 1/3 ITS LIFE!

Does the New System of Creating "Infant Prodigies" Mean "Educational Infanticide?"

"EDUCATIONAL infanticide is a wicked crime against the child and against civilization.

"MAN is an infant until he reaches the age of twenty-five years.

"PREMATURITY hinders the preparation for large usefulness.

"A YOUNG man should not be ready to take up his life work until he is twenty-seven years old.

"CHILDREN should be encouraged to play until they are twenty-five.

"A CHILD taught too early dies an old man twenty-five years before he ought.

"THE age limit of efficiency is extending itself; from fifty years at the beginning of the century it is now near sixty-five.

"THIS is not, as is often said, the age of the young man. It is the age of the prepared man.

"IT is better to start in one's lifework too late than too early.

—Dr. Guy Potter Benton, President University of Vermont.

This—



At Five Begins to Learn.



Graduated on 22nd Birthday.



At 28 Takes Up His Work.



At 60 Is in His Intellectual Prime.



At 5 a Student.



At 12 He Enters College.



At 20 Does Brilliant Work.



At 40 a Worn Out Old Man.

THE proper education of the child is the paramount problem of today. Dr. Guy Potter Benton, the recently inaugurated president of the University of Vermont here takes issue radically with Professor Boris Sidis, of Harvard University, whose system of education has received world-wide notice through the entrance of his thirteen year old son William into Harvard as an advanced student.

Professor Sidis begins the education of the child at the age of three. His ideas are quoted in part at the left hand top of this page. Since the case of his son became public many "infant prodigies" produced by slight variations of the Sidis system have appeared. The most notable is a girl, Winifred Stoner, of Pittsburg, who at the age of thirteen compares with young Sidis in learning.

Does this early education of the child cut one third of the allotted three score and ten, making old men and women of them at forty? Dr. Benton says so, calling the system "educational infanticide." His article upon the subject, written especially for this newspaper, follows.

By Dr. Guy Potter Benton
President of the University of Vermont.

EDUCATIONAL infanticide, as I call it, is a wicked crime against civilization.

I define educational infanticide as the process of pushing maturity down into infancy. It is the intellectual forcing of children, just as plants in a hothouse are forced, by being surrounded with the most ideal conditions. Their brains are encouraged to become unhealthily active. Their mental powers are overtaxed. Their minds work overtime.

There have been cases of children who did wonderful mental work at an early age. Before they were six they were able to read and write better than most grown folk. A year or so later they were delving into the ancient Greek and Roman classics for light reading. At the age when the normal child is romping about his play they were toying with the Fourth Dimension.

That is what I call educational infanticide! There are two possible ways of educating the children of the age. The one method I have called the "hothouse method." By that method the child is "forced" and his brain is unhealthily stimulated. It undertakes tasks too heavy at a too early age.

The other method is the one adapted to the normal development of a man or woman. Under this method the educational process is not rapid. The child is led slowly along the way it should go, instead of being pushed or jerked up a path too steep for its feet to negotiate without injury.

My idea of a proper educational plan would extend over a much longer period than the "hothouse" method could endure.

The normal boy child begins to talk between the ages of one and two years. He begins to observe at once, and the next three or four years are crammed with mental acquisitions. The human being learns more, normally, between the first and fifth year of its existence than in all the later years of its life. It acquires the art of speech. It learns to walk. It learns to see clearly and to understand the words of others. It acquires a great mass of general knowledge of the world in which its life is to be spent.

This knowledge comes to the child, whether its mind is fed with other information or not. At this age the child mind is immensely receptive. Its capabilities for assimilation are immense. But they cannot be taxed to the utmost without being strained and weakened. The normal child's mind has about all it can do, in these years, without extra strain. So, until the child is five years old, I should teach it nothing and make little or no conscious effort at its instruction.

In the normal child the fifth birthday marks the point at which it is safe and advisable to begin instruction. The child is not yet ready for strenuous mental work by any means. It is no more ready for higher mathematics than at the age of two it was ready to run a hundred yards in ten seconds. But the capabilities for learning are latent, and the first teachings should be elementary and simple. If they are delayed, harm is done. If they are begun too soon, much greater permanent harm is done.

When the child is five years old, it may begin to learn the alphabet, to gain some idea of the manner in which words are symbolized in written or printed characters. It may, in short, begin to learn to read and write.

Little Winifred Stoner, the Pittsburgh Child Raised by the Boris Sidis Method, Now a Prodigy, but Whose Life Will Be Shortened One-third If Dr. Benton Is Correct.



The average child will do well to enter the elementary schools when it is seven years old. By that time, from association with its small playfellows, it has overcome the diffidence of the baby, and the entrance into a new life in the schools is not so abrupt.

The elementary school training should occupy eight years, as it does in most places at the present time. There should be no attempt at short cuts or "double promotions" during these eight years. The child should learn leisurely at this period of its life. For it is learning all the time, outside of school, more than it learns in the classroom.

The high-school course of four years is the proper length, and here again the child should not be hurried. That is the first principle of a proper educational plan. In my opinion, leisurely acquisition of knowledge.

Pursuing its studies in regular course, the child is ready for college at the age of eighteen or nineteen. By that time, in boys at any rate, the change to college life, with the usual separation from home ties, is a beneficial one. The boy is old enough to think for himself and to adjust himself gradually to the changed surroundings of college.

The child will be graduated from college at the age of twenty-two or twenty-

three. I say "the child" still, for the normal person is, and should be, an infant until the age of twenty-five.

After graduation from college the young man is ready to choose a profession or to decide on his life work. Before that time he has not been competent to do so. The purpose of a college education, to my way of thinking, is to enable a man to decide intelligently what his life is to be. In my experience I have seen many instances to support this view. I have seen young men who came to college with the idea that because they had fitted their homes with electric bells they had the makings of electrical engineers. It took the first bitter taste of some branch of higher mathematics to convince them that they had mistaken their calling. Then they were quick to petition for a change in their electives.

At the age of twenty-eight to thirty years the youth is ready and able to take up his life work. He is a well-balanced, normal, sane being. In the fullness of strength and ready for the work ahead of him.

Contrast this plan with the one urged by those who would rush a child into man's estate in ten or fifteen years.



Willie Sidis, Raised by His Father's Method, Who According to Dr. Benton Will Be Senile at 40.

At the age of two, the child's mind is eager and acquisitive, but the play instinct is dominant.

A year later it has been taught something of how to think and has learned to read and to write. The play instinct is suppressed by the influence of the parent or teacher.

Another year sees the play instinct dormant, and the child the intellectual equal of a well-grown young man!

At six years old, the play instinct is hopelessly dead. The child lives only through its brain. It is a serious minded thing, whose sense of humor responds only to the stilted jokes of the classic authors, or the ponderous epigrams of Dr. Johnson and his school.

The body may be developed properly. The child may be physically healthy. But the brain is overworked steadily!

For a few years the effect will not appear. The child will be a "prodigy," so called—the pride of its parents and the admiration of its parents' friends.

Then the body will begin to dwarf itself automatically. Physical effects will appear. The abnormal brain will shine out through the eyes, and in most cases the head will be unusually developed.

Through the twenties, the child will do wonderful things intellectually.

Then come the thirties, and an inevitable and practically universal decay and aging of mind and body.

Death, insanity, or a loss of the brain's powers surely follow!

The life is cut from the allotted three-score years and ten to a bare two-score.

The effect of child labor is familiar to every one. It may be seen most frequently in European cities. The streets are full of queer little figures with preternaturally grave faces, old before their time. They are men when they should be playing around in someone's back yard. When they should be men, a few years later, they are most often mental and physical wrecks.

It is the same way with too early and too strenuous brain work. The child can do it all right, just as the child laborer can tend the machine or pick the slate from the coal, or drive the mule team in the coal mine.

But the effect is sure to make itself felt. The mind of the child becomes, all too soon, the mind of a grown man. And ten or twenty years later, when the mind should be at its best, the "hothouse" child is a mental wreck and good for nothing.

I have said that to-day is the age of the prepared man. The value of preparation is seen every day. The slow and sure process of education is the one that wins out in the long run, every time. The list of men who have accomplished great things in their youth and have continued their accomplishments through a long and worthy life is a short one.

The age limit of efficiency has advanced in this century. The men who controlled and directed the destinies of this republic in its early days were usually within the fifties.

A few years ago Dr. Osler declared that a man of sixty had arrived at the limit of usefulness. But now we see a man of sixty-five appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States, and many instances might be enumerated of perfect accomplishment reached only after the age limit fixed by Dr. Osler had been passed.

The longer the period of infancy is protracted, the more efficient your man will be.

Stop the Crab! It's Fast Following the Lobster Into Oblivion!

By Rene Bache

WHAT is Broadway going to do? The "lobster palaces," representing the highest gastronomic uplift of the metropolis, are in danger.

What is a lobster palace without lobsters? One might reply that crabs are an available substitute for the nobler and fast-disappearing crustacean. For some time past, indeed, chafing dish and other appetizing preparations of crabs have been commonly and acceptably served in place of lobster at New York's most expensive hotels and restaurants.

But, alas! what agonizing cry is this that begins to make itself heard? The crab output, hitherto deemed unlimited and inexhaustible, is showing signs of rapid diminution. It is unable much longer to stand the tremendous drafts upon it.

It is the cannibal business that is mainly responsible for the threatened disappearance of the "blue" crab. For some unknown reason, the animal breeds only in the lower

part of Chesapeake Bay, where all the canneries are situated. An inquiry into the subject made by the Fisheries Bureau showed that a single cannery establishment used some hundreds of millions of crabs in a year—nearly all of them egg-bearing females. As one result, "soft" crabs are getting scarce, and those which come to market are undersized.

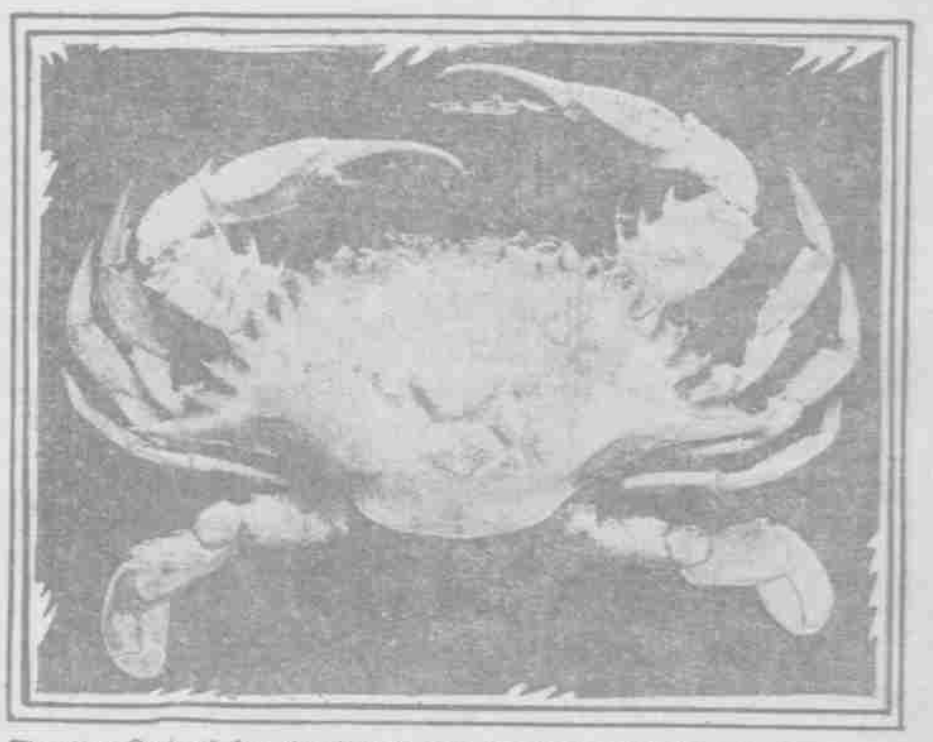
It has been said that no other water space of equal area in the world produces so much food for mankind as the Chesapeake, and, if oysters be excepted, crabs are its principal crop. Not only are vast numbers, both soft and "hard backed," sent alive to distant points, but the "meats" are put up in bulk for shipment to all parts of the country. Add to these items the hundreds of millions used annually by canners, and it is not surprising that crabs should be getting scarcer.

The situation, however, is undeniably alarming. What is to be done about it? Hatch them artificially, says the Fisheries Bureau. It is the only way to solve the problem. But,

fortunately, the business of hatching lobsters—for one reason, because unlimited quantities of their eggs are readily procurable. An average female lobster carries only 10,000 eggs, while the mother crab produces 2,500,000 at a spawning, her ova being no bigger than "dust" shot, such as that used for killing humming birds.

Thus it seems that a few thousand female crabs, collected at the spawning season in the lower Chesapeake, would yield billions on billions of eggs, which (as trials already made have shown) can easily be hatched in glass jars, such as those employed for the incubation of shad eggs.

Stations for the purpose could be established at suitable points on the shores of the lower Potomac and Chesapeake Bay, and as many baby crabs could be turned out as might be required to maintain the supply, no matter how great the draft upon the latter by the lobster palaces, the enormous Western demand for the live food product in seaweed, and the consumption of "meats" in bulk and in cans.



The Blue Crab of America Which May Follow the Lobster Into Extinction.